

The situation in Singapore by Luc Verley

The past year has been extremely difficult for Singapore due to the pandemic, as I am sure was the same in all other countries and regions. Due to the strict measures taken by the Singapore government to fight the pandemic, such as closure of borders, travel restrictions, limited gatherings and working from home as default, to name a few.

Singapore as a maritime cluster has always been a hub in the region, with many marine surveyors normally travelling with ease in the Southeast Asian region and beyond. Unfortunately, that all came to an end due to travel restrictions.

Traveling in the region result in long quarantine period upon arrival and when returning to Singapore, for example under the current measures a trip to Indonesia would require 14 days of quarantine in a hotel facility upon arrival in the country, and when returning 21 days quarantine in a hotel facility in Singapore, for a marine survey of 2 days this is simply unworkable.

Furthermore, many countries have border restriction that doesn't allow entry into the country.

Also, within Singapore it became more difficult to carry out marine survey work. Under the current measures marine surveyors who wants to go onboard of vessels in the ports, anchorage or shipyards need to be going for weekly PCR testing.

The good news is that most people working in the marine industry received a priority for getting vaccinated, so all active marine surveyors in Singapore are vaccinated, however up till now being vaccinated doesn't exempt you from weekly PCR testing or allows you travelling.

Lots of work including marine surveying work has been carried out remotely through video links, digital pictures and even drone inspections.

The words of Charles Darwin often come to mind: "It is not the strongest of species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change".

And lastly, these days it is better to be negative, because if you are positive, you're in trouble....

Luc Verley

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